

**Statement of Karl A. Racine
Attorney General for the District of Columbia**

Before the

**Committee on the Judiciary
Kenyan McDuffie, Chairperson**

**Office of the Attorney General
Performance Oversight Hearing
FY 2014 to FY 2015**



**Office of the Attorney General
for the District of Columbia**

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**Room 500
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Introduction

Good morning Chairman McDuffie, Councilmembers, and staff. I am Karl A. Racine, and I have the privilege of serving as Attorney General for the District of Columbia. I am both honored and humbled that our residents chose me to serve as the first elected Attorney General in the history of our great city. I am pleased to be here before you to present the accomplishments of the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) for Fiscal Year 2014 and Fiscal Year 2015 to date. I will also take some of my time to share my vision and goals for the Office as we move forward, so you and the public are informed of my priorities.

First, let me thank my predecessor, Irv Nathan, for the exemplary work he did in leading a group of outstanding attorneys and staff in producing many of the remarkable results I will describe at this hearing. Thanks to Attorney General Nathan, I inherited an exceptionally talented, dedicated, and professional group of attorneys and staff. These public servants work hard for the residents of the District of Columbia each and every day. My plan is to build upon that foundation to create an Office of the Attorney General that is a world-class public law firm and the gold standard for state attorneys general offices throughout the nation.

I was sworn into office on January 2, 2015, and immediately began establishing and building a culture at OAG, and within the government of the District of Columbia, that makes clear OAG's primary role as the District's chief legal office – including our responsibility to provide independent and objective advice to the Mayor, Council, District agencies, and the residents of the District of Columbia. I want to thank you, Chairman McDuffie, for your

leadership and for working closely with me to ensure that the transition to an independent OAG is a smooth and transparent one.

During the last fiscal year and during the first two quarters of this fiscal year, OAG has responded to numerous requests for opinions and rendered advice on a broad range of legal, legislative, ethical and regulatory issues, including:

- Initiative 71;
- The Budget Autonomy Act;
- The legal and regulatory changes needed to bring the District's firearms laws into compliance with the *Palmer* decision;
- Educational initiatives directed at improving the academic success of young boys of color;
- Legal concerns raised by the Reproductive Health Non-Discrimination Amendment Act;
- Revocations of the charters of public charter schools; and
- A host of other legal, ethical, and regulatory matters.

During my initial weeks in office, OAG lawyers and staff have successfully defended the District and its agencies in significant court cases and brought home to the District's coffers \$21.5 million in its share of a major settlement with Wall Street Firm Standard & Poor's—in fact, the District treasury received the \$21.5 million yesterday. We also provided objective analysis of the legal sufficiency of various pieces of proposed legislation, and counseled the District in disposition of property and other important business transactions.

In addition, and consistent with the establishment of an independent OAG, we have begun to implement four initiatives, programmatically, that I outlined in the *Keys to Justice*, my campaign platform. I expect to discuss these more in our forthcoming budget submission. The initiatives are:

- (1) Consumer Protection and Community Outreach;
- (2) Affordable Housing Protection and Enforcement;
- (3) Public Safety and Criminal Justice, Protecting Children and Families, and Juvenile Rehabilitation; and
- (4) Protecting Taxpayers, Workers and Enforcing Honest Government.

These initiatives are designed to address many of the concerns raised by District residents on issues in which the OAG plays an important role. Moreover, I had an opportunity to meet with each member of the Council and exchange ideas regarding our respective concerns – each of which turned out to be concerns we shared mutually. This has led to robust and helpful discussions. These conversations have further informed me on how best to expand and refine my priorities and proceed with implementing them.

Not only will these initiatives serve the public interest, as envisioned by the Council and voters, but they will also generate substantial revenue for the District of Columbia. As we enter our Fiscal Year 2016 budget season, I look forward to meeting with the Chief Financial Officer, the Mayor, and Council to discuss our needs. If funded, the resources we are requesting will generate additional revenue for the District coffers and provide the District with top-notch, first-class legal services.

When the people of the District elected their Attorney General, they wanted an office that was directly accessible to residents. So, in the time since I have taken office, I have made it a

priority to make myself and my office available to communities and groups across the District.

To that end, I have already spent time engaging with:

- Students at Hart Middle School in Ward 8 about youth violence;
- Business and community leaders on a host of issues;
- Seniors who have concerns about housing fairness and affordability;
- The community in a discussion about prosecutorial discretion as a panelist at a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day event at Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church;
- Students, faculty and other community members as a panelist in a discussion at George Washington University dealing with issues surrounding equitable justice and high-profile shootings of African-American males;
- Ward 7 community as the keynote speaker at Capitol View Library on Dr. King's legacy, examining if our country has seen enough progress on racial equality in the past 50 years;
- Civic groups about the role of the Attorney General and my goals for the office; and
- The D.C. Bar's District of Columbia Affairs Section on a host of legal issues related to the District.

I continue to meet with civic leaders, union representatives, business leaders, and with non-profits and other advocacy groups. Additionally, OAG staff has regularly met with community groups and students of all grade levels to discuss the work of OAG, to mediate neighborhood issues, and to work with outside groups to explore how we can collaborate to protect and improve the quality of life for District residents. In short, we are working hard to make the OAG not only the best public law firm in the nation, but the best public advocate, too. That requires us to interact with the community and respond to its needs. My overall goal is ensuring that OAG's nine legal divisions and one support-services division work together to provide high-quality legal representation to the District, to serve the public interest and to protect the District's treasury. I look forward to working with you and your colleagues on the Council to co-host future meetings on topics affecting our residents.

I set forth an ambitious platform when I campaigned to be the District of Columbia's first elected Attorney General. It was a plan that I believed was critical to unlocking fairness for everyone in our city. I have taken this and have modeled it into four forthcoming budget initiatives mentioned earlier that are crucial to achieving my long-term vision for the OAG. I understand that with a budget gap, it will be incumbent upon OAG to raise our own revenue to offset the costs for these initiatives, which are critical to our public mission. I intend to do this in part by vigorously pursuing unscrupulous persons or businesses that prey on District consumers and fraudulently obtain taxpayer funds. As you may know, I previously served as a managing partner for a national law firm, with 600 lawyers and a budget of over \$350 million. I intend to bring the private-sector philosophy of setting goals in generating annual revenue to our new OAG business model.

OAG's Consumer Protection Section has done an outstanding job protecting District consumers, and we can enhance these efforts with resources funded solely by money we secure on behalf of the District of Columbia. For example, already in Fiscal Year 2015, with our small staff in OAG's Consumer Protection Section, we have recovered \$21.5 million from a multistate litigation settlement against Standard and Poor's. OAG is also poised to recover, on the District's behalf, *up to an additional \$90 million* this fiscal year in a case filed against two notable online hotel companies. As you know, the District can use these funds to offset an anticipated shortfall in Fiscal Year 2016. With a FY 2015 local budget of only \$55 million,

OAG stands to contribute to the District treasury by more than twice this amount this year. This, by any measure, is an excellent return on investment.

OAG's Consumer Protection Section is not the only income-generating unit within OAG. OAG's Commercial Division routinely preserves tens of millions of dollars of projected tax revenue each year by litigating tax appeals. OAG's Civil Enforcement Section recovers \$3-5 million in fines and penalties on behalf of District agencies each year. OAG's Civil Litigation and Public Interest Divisions have recovered multiple millions of dollars in contract appeals cases, as well as avoided nearly \$2 billion in potential liability each year. The Office of the Solicitor General preserves trial court wins and appeals trial court losses, when appropriate. The Personnel, Labor and Employment Division ensures that the valid personnel/employment decisions of city agencies are upheld and comply with applicable laws and regulations, and the Legal Counsel Division advises the Attorney General, Mayor, District agencies and other governmental entities on federal and local laws and rules, helping to minimize costly litigation risks and protect the interests of not only the District government, but also of the District's residents and businesses. OAG's Child Support Services Division annually collects an average of \$56 million for the approximate 46 percent of District children with a child support order. The Family Services Division protects the District's children, and the Public Safety Division helps keep the District of Columbia safe. Finally, the Support Services Division provides the infrastructure necessary to support the legal divisions' operations.

OAG's FY 2014-2015 Accomplishments

OAG had a very successful FY 2014-2015 performance year. Let me share just a few of the highlights of each Division's accomplishments:

The Legal Counsel Division

- The Legal Counsel Division (LCD) played an essential role in assisting both the Mayor and Council on significant issues, such as drafting the legislation and regulations needed to amend the District's firearms laws in the wake of the *Palmer* decision. This included preparing two emergency bills and one permanent bill to create a concealed-pistol-licensing scheme and two sets of rules to create the licensing scheme and the hearing procedures for the newly created Concealed Carry Licensing Review Board.
- LCD also made a significant contribution to the District's efforts to assess the legality of Initiative 71, its implementation, and various issues associated with the legalization of marijuana.
- LCD also worked with the Mayor, the Council, and the CFO to assess the availability of funds from different sources to support the transactions necessary to move forward with the construction of the District's new soccer stadium. It worked with the Commercial Division to propose amendments to the authorizing legislation that would cure significant defects and render the stadium legislation legally sufficient.
- In addition, LCD has been and is continuing to work with Council staff to improve the Wage Theft Act enacted by the Council last fall in order to address questions raised by that Act and to improve the enforcement provisions in order to enhance the rights of wage theft victims.
- LCD has also assisted the Department of General Services, the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME), and OAG on various issues related to the disposition of surplus schools and has provided legal advice to the DME regarding the revocation, closing, and management of a charter school.
- An LCD attorney is providing ongoing legal support to the District on issues related to the negotiation of a proposed Capital Funding Agreement to provide multi-jurisdictional funding of WMATA's capital needs for the next six years.
- LCD provided advice regarding the authority of the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department to serve as the entity charged with overseeing the safety of the DC Streetcar, consistent with federal law so it can qualify for federal funding.
- An LCD attorney also serves on the Sign Regulation Working Group, a multi-agency effort to review and revise the District's problematic and obsolete sign regulations, providing advice on drafting and substantive issues, including First Amendment

questions. The Working Group intends to submit these regulations to the Council for review in the near future.

The Family Services Division

- OAG’s Child Protection Section (CPS) within the Family Services Division collaborated with the D.C. Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) to reduce the number of children placed in foster care by increasing awareness and training on the community papering process. Community papering allows CFSA to initiate court proceedings for abuse and neglect cases while allowing children to remain in the home with their parent(s). This process prevents placement of children in foster care while allowing court intervention and oversight to resolve abuse and neglect issues. CPS worked with CFSA to develop a new protocol for community papering and improved tracking of community papering outcomes. Moreover, we collaborated with CFSA to develop a community papering Administrative Issuance, which was finalized in November 2014. CPS provided CFSA with a *Community Papering Tip Sheet* that provides social workers with guidelines for community papering.
- CPS also developed and presented webinar training for CFSA social workers, which has been recorded for future access. Thus far, CPS has seen an increase of 70% in community papered cases from the first two quarters of FY 2014, surpassing our goal of 10 percent. In addition, CPS continues to successfully prosecute abuse and neglect cases in the District, with a success rate of 97% in cases tried and successful resolution by stipulation in 84% of the cases. CPS has partnered with the D.C. Superior Court to ensure timely resolution of all abuse and neglect cases, resulting in an Administrative Order that provides mandated timelines for court findings in all litigated matters.
- OAG’s Domestic Violence Section (DVS), with the Family Services Division exceeded its contempt performance measure by 61 percent in the first quarter of FY 2015 as the result of successfully adopting creative strategies to hold respondents accountable for fulfilling their obligations under civil protection orders. DVS attorneys also led Street Law classes on employment and labor law for high school students at School Without Walls; served as instructors at two separate national American Bar Association trainings on domestic violence; and, as part of their regular participation in the Elder Abuse Prevention Committee, helped lead a community-education event for seniors called “MoneySmart,” advising seniors how to avoid financial exploitation.

The Child Support Services Division

- In FY 2015 the Child Support Services Division (CSSD) established 2,039 new court orders, exceeding its goal by seven percent. Moreover, in FY 2015 the CSSD increased its collections on cases with arrears by 2.6 percentage points. CSSD was awarded a federal grant totaling approximately \$1.15 million targeted toward behavior intervention for non-custodial families. The implementation of the program is slated to begin by April 2015. I am pleased to report that on February 16, 2015, the CSSD completed its database conversion for its automated case management system.

- On August 22, 2015 the CSSD will host an outreach event for non-custodial parents and their children. The event is designed to provide information relating to health care, employment, job opportunities and child support. It will also give the parents the opportunity to spend some quality time with their children in a fun environment.

The Personnel, Labor and Employment Division

- The Personnel, Labor and Employment Division (PLED) participated in sessions designed to help agency hearing officers comply with existing regulations and reduce the risk or challenges to employment actions. PLED also provided training to the District's Office of Risk Management at monthly roundtable discussions designed not only to anticipate arguments of opposing counsel in upcoming trials, but also to prevent similar future occurrences. Because of the hard work of the defense team and the Office of Risk Management, this risk-management effort reduced payouts from the Public Sector Workers Compensation Program.

The Public Safety Division

- OAG continues, through its Public Safety Division, to work to ensure the quality of life in the District by fighting and preventing crime and delinquency by young people. During the campaign for Attorney General, I made a promise that one of my top priorities in office would be reforming our juvenile-justice system. Our Juvenile Section brings delinquency cases against children up to 18 years old with the dual purpose of prosecution and rehabilitation. So far in FY 2015 we have opened more than 4,600 cases. Many youth are diverted from the system by MPD prior to arrest and more are diverted by OAG. The truth, however, is that we must provide for more diversion opportunities -- and we are trying to do so. I am committed to working to keep more young people out of the juvenile justice system and instead make available the kinds of services that are desperately needed to prevent juvenile crime.
- We continue to work closely with D.C. Public Schools, our public charter schools and Court Social Services to play our limited but important role in combatting truancy. Our Juvenile Section prosecutes parents of children under 13 and juveniles from 13 to 18 for chronic truancy. The goal, of course, is to get truant children back in the classroom, and we have leveraged our enhanced role under the Attendance Accountability Amendments Act to use the possibility of prosecution as a tool to reduce truancy diverting as many children as availability allows. We are utilizing the additional resources the Council provided us for FY 2015 for our truancy cases.
- OAG's Public Safety Division also works to mitigate nuisance properties that are the scene of drug, gun or prostitution activity. It stays in close touch with local neighborhoods, citizens groups and communities to identify problems such as these and uses negotiation or litigation to abate them. It has opened 65 matters so far in FY 2015. As I promised to do during the campaign, I plan to reach out more to communities to hear from them, keep them informed about what we are doing, and strengthen them in every way possible. So I plan to do more work in the area of nuisance abatement.

- The Public Safety Division is also a potential money-maker for the District. In FY 2015, the D.C. Court of Appeals confirmed a judgment for attorneys' fees in the amount of \$76,000 in one of our cases. Its tax and welfare cases recovered tens of thousands of dollars' worth of restitution orders.
- Our Criminal Section processes approximately 16,000 adult criminal misdemeanor matters a year on average. So far in FY 2015, more than 5,200 cases have been opened. Of those, 2,400 have been papered. Some of these, like driving while impaired by alcohol or drugs and firearms offenses, make a major contribution to public safety. Others help maintain the quality of life for District residents.
- In an extraordinary effort, OAG's Neighborhood and Victims Services (NVS) Section within the Public Safety Division assisted in improving the quality of life for our residents in the District's Sursum Corda neighborhood. NVS worked with the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) to hold the property owner and management responsible for criminal activity. Using evidence developed by MPD, OAG sued the owner and property manager in September of 2014. NVS attorneys are still involved in litigation, but have reached an interim settlement agreement that required lights, cameras and security. We are optimistic that this lawsuit will bring positive public-safety changes to this neighborhood while maintaining affordable housing in the District.

The Commercial, Public Interest and Civil Litigation Divisions

I assure you that each attorney and staff member in the Office of Attorney General is keenly aware of our civic and professional duty to assist our most vulnerable residents. It bears pointing out, though, that this can be accomplished most effectively by winning in court. And, on that count, OAG has an outstanding record. In cases handled by our Civil Litigation Division and the Equity Section of the Public Interest Division in FY 2014, we won 203 out of 224 cases on motion or at trial – a remarkable success rate of 91 percent.

- The Tax and Finance Section is on track, with the \$5.7 billion in public financings during FY 2014 dwarfing the \$2.0 billion and \$1.7 billion public financing programs of FY 2010 and 2009, respectively. Revenue bond financings, which are a portion of the District's total public financings, generate administrative fees for the District. TF AAGs are intimately engaged in drafting the authorizing legislation and approval resolutions as well as negotiating, drafting and completing related certificates, contracts, agreements, prospectuses, and the closing opinions of the Attorney General for all of the District's public financings. During FY 2014, the District collected more than \$2 million in administrative fees from this activity.

- OAG’s Real Estate Transaction Section provides independent and thorough legal representation regarding the continuing revitalization of District neighborhoods. The section works with developers to rehabilitate and construct numerous projects for new District facilities (e.g. the new fire station and new library in the West End neighborhood in Northwest and the new fire station in Southwest), historic properties (e.g. the Lincoln Theatre and the Hurt Home), properties formerly used as public schools (e.g. the Franklin School and Stevens School), and the creation of housing opportunities in buildings on previously vacant District properties. When the Mayor and Council considered the structure for the new independent attorney general, you were wise to keep this attorney reporting structure within OAG. It is essential for the public’s faith in an open, transparent government that real estate deals are reviewed in a sober, independent, and dispassionate manner.

The successes of our OAG Divisions are evident not only in win-loss statistics, but also in terms of dollars saved for the District. In the last year, we resolved hundreds of suits where the total demand against the District was approximately \$1.73 billion.¹ As a result of motions, settlements and trials, we resolved all of these actions for approximately \$12.5 million, or 0.72 percent of the claimed damages, resulting in claimed liability avoided of approximately \$1.72 billion. Although justice cannot be measured in terms of dollars and cents, it should be clear from the record that the OAG is a more than sound investment for the District.

The Support Services Division

- The Support Services Division completed construction on its state-of-the-art moot courtroom facility. The moot courtroom contains both a trial and appellate courtroom that seats up to 125 individuals, as well as video-teleconferencing, multiple video monitors and overflow viewing capacity.

The Ruff Fellow, Pro Bono, and Public Interest Fellow Programs

- OAG has, as of the end of January, begun the fourth year of the Charles F.C. Ruff Fellowship program. Under this program, which former Attorney General Irv Nathan began in 2011, OAG secured commitments this year from five of the law schools located in the District (George Washington University, Georgetown University, the University of the District of Columbia, American University and Howard University) to fund, on a

¹The \$1.73 billion figure is much lower than the actual total amount claimed in the lawsuits that were resolved in FY 2014, which was \$10.22 billion. However, this \$10.22 billion figure includes three highly inflated demands that claimed a total of \$8.5 billion, but did not, in our view, present a substantial threat of liability.

matching basis with the District, salaries for Fellows -- recent law-school graduates with outstanding records who are committed to public service -- to work for the office for one year. These Fellows are assigned within OAG, including several who have been assigned to the Public Interest Division consistent with my goals for District taxpayer protection. Fourteen Fellows have been selected for 2015, and I am pleased to note that, over the past several years, we have hired a number of the former Fellows for permanent positions within our OAG Divisions. I look forward to working with you, Chairman McDuffie, during our upcoming budget consideration to ensure we can expand this remarkable program.

- We also continue to maximize our capability through increasing our number of lawyers at little or no cost to the District. We are actively pursuing an expansion of the OAG's *pro bono* attorney support from the generous local private bar. This has led to a number of courtroom victories and excellent briefs filed by *pro bono* counsel, working with and under the supervision of OAG lawyers. We are deeply indebted to numerous law firms and private practitioners in the city who have devoted substantial man-hours to assisting us without charge in difficult litigations. For example, in the CityCenter case involving important labor-law issues that could if wrongly decided cost the District millions of dollars under the Davis-Bacon Act, we have partnered on a *pro bono* basis with outstanding co-counsel at Morgan Lewis and Bockius, a major management-side labor law firm, and have as a result made what I believe is a very strong case, currently pending in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, to set aside an adverse decision by the U.S. Labor Department.
- OAG continues to offer recent law school graduates and experienced practitioners the opportunity to work as public-interest fellows. Public-interest fellowships are available to recent law school graduates who have secured financial support—typically from a law firm or a law school—that allows them to work *pro bono* for a public-interest organization. Public interest fellows commit to working full-time, for three to 18 months, in a division or section of OAG that specializes in civil or criminal enforcement, defensive litigation, legal counsel, or transactional work. Public Interest Fellows receive supervision and mentoring by an attorney-manager, formal training opportunities, and, as they develop new skills, progressively more challenging assignments.
- OAG also has a very successful internship and externship program. We recruit interns and externs throughout the year. In the summer, OAG has about 100 law student and undergraduate interns from various schools around the country. In the spring and the fall, we recruit law students from local schools, including the University of the District of Columbia, Howard University, Catholic University, Georgetown University, and The George Washington University.

OAG Office Operations and Staff

My senior staff and I are meeting with our attorneys and staff and are making it crystal clear that we have an open-door policy. I am closely studying concerns the union and individual line attorneys have raised, with an emphasis on an open line of communication and respectful dialogue. Consistent with the open-door policy, I am meeting individually and collectively with numerous staff and line attorneys to hear their concerns, have regularly participated in formal labor-management meetings, and have attended informal gatherings of the line attorneys. Through Personnel, Labor Relations and other divisions, we continue to improve morale and labor relations by being responsive to the needs of its unions, AFGE and AFSCME. Both organizations appear to appreciate OAG's responsiveness.

It is critical that we continue to work with the agencies, affected stakeholders, and the courts to resolve the remaining long-standing major class-action litigations against the District that long ago resulted in consent decrees. Though much more work remains in the remaining litigations (including the *Evans*, *LaShawn* and *Salazar* cases), these cases demonstrate the commitment by the impacted agencies and our office to ensuring that the District demonstrates it is able to fulfill its legal requirements without court supervision. The previous resolutions in the *Blackman*, *Jones*, *Dixon* and *Petties* cases serve as models for the District's remaining major class-action consent decree cases still pending. We are committed to the return of control over basic agency functions to the District government, in furtherance of the District's long march towards complete self-governance.

As I move forward, I want to ensure that our legal teams have the necessary powers, authority, capabilities and manpower and must look for ways to accomplish this without adding materially to our costs.

We will continue to collaborate with the Mayor and her excellent team of legal professionals, along with the Council and your remarkable attorneys. I want to take a moment to publicly thank Dave Zvenyach, General Counsel to the Council, for his years of dedicated, aggressive, and thoughtful work on behalf of the Council and the residents of the District of Columbia. I understand that he is moving on to a new challenge, and I want to wish him well with his new endeavors.

I've mentioned a number of successes that OAG has experienced in this last fiscal year. There are several I would like to emphasize that have taken place just in the short time I've been in office and how these achievements truly benefit the 660,000 residents of the District of Columbia:

The \$21.5 million our attorneys obtained for the District from the Standard & Poor's settlement not only grows our treasury, but it also exacts a measure of justice from a Wall Street firm for all the homeowners and investors in our city who – as a result of that firm's decision to falsely provide high credit ratings to securities they knew to be risky – lost millions of dollars during the housing crisis and the Great Recession that resulted from it.

The work we are doing every day to end decades-old consent decrees and federal oversight of District agencies not only helps bring these entities back under our own government's control, but also ultimately will save the taxpayers of the District millions of dollars we would otherwise incur due to the demands of court and federal oversight.

The two major cases in which we've successfully defended lawsuits against our Metropolitan Police Department just in the last couple of weeks have also saved our taxpayers millions of dollars, preserving funds that could be used for needs like more affordable housing and higher salaries for teachers and firefighters.

Our efforts to reform and reduce the practice of shackling juveniles will help improve our residents' overall quality of life by bringing us one step closer to a juvenile-justice system that is rehabilitative in its focus more than it is punitive – and I'd like to thank Superior Court Chief Judge Lee Satterfield, the staff in the Public Defender Services, and you, Councilmember McDuffie, for your extraordinary efforts to work with us on this issue.

And our legal advice to our Mayor, our Council and our public-safety officials on the proper implementation of Initiative 71 has not only kept us within the law, but has also upheld the expressed will of a large majority of our voters in the face of threats and bullying from some members of Congress.

We could not do any of these things if we did not have an absolutely extraordinary team of lawyers and staff in place at OAG. At the core of every lawsuit we file and every action we take is the duty to make our residents' lives better – because the residents of the District of Columbia are our ultimate clients. To this point, I want to offer one more story.

OAG's Neighborhood and Victim Services section was notified about a blind, elderly gentleman who owned a home in Northeast. MPD's First District Vice Unit conducted a drug investigation leading to a search warrant, where they found this gentleman. He lived upstairs in his own home with no plumbing while his "caretakers" operated a fully functional crack house downstairs. He had a five-gallon bucket next to his bed as his toilet. The house had such a severe mold problem that several police officers fell ill from inhaling the air in the home.

Following these search warrants, NVS Assistant Attorneys General assisted in getting the homeowner a guardian appointed by the court. In lieu of litigation, where NVS would have to file suit against the victim for owning a drug and firearm nuisance property, NVS worked together with the newly-appointed guardian and other District agencies to make sure that he

would be safe and taken care of with dignity. Our attorneys met with the guardian and the elderly victim regularly and made a plan to get him out safely with the most amount of equity in his home. He was eventually moved to a group home, began eating properly and gained 18 pounds. On November 26, 2014, NVS got a call from the guardian that the closing on the home was complete. The proceeds of the property's sale will take care of this elderly gentleman for the rest of his life. We understand that he appears to be now healthy, happy and doing well.

When we look at the OAG attorneys and staff members who brought about a happy ending for this gentleman and who have won or saved the District tens of millions of dollars in this fiscal year alone, we can't help but realize just how truly extraordinary OAG's work is. Eighty percent of our costs go to personnel – the people who do this amazing work on the District's behalf day in and day out. But our attorneys make much less than their peers in other organizations and sectors. Even our Collective Bargaining Unit attorneys – who earn more than their non-CBU colleagues – earn less than their federal counterparts. The starting salaries for our entry-level attorneys generally range between \$61,000 and \$73,000. With law-school loans averaging \$150,000 to \$200,000, OAG salaries do not adequately support their financial obligations, particularly with the high cost of living in the region. That must change.

Without a doubt, additional resources will enable OAG to better serve the public interest and the District's fiscal health. OAG has a proven record of success and can recover greater sums for, and render greater public service to, the District of Columbia if it has the necessary tools and resources. In the coming weeks, I will preview my budget submission with the Chief Financial Officer, the Mayor and the Council and look forward to discussing ways we can invest in the OAG and increase revenues in future years.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the work of the Office of the Attorney General. It is our goal that the OAG continue to provide the District government the highest-quality legal services while promoting the public interest. I am pleased to answer any questions that the members of the Committee may have. Thank you.